

AGENDA
Pribilof Islands Collaborative (PIC)
Promoting a Strong Economy and a Healthy Ecosystem
Northern Fur Seal Meeting
January 28 - 30, 2005
UAA Commons; Anchorage, Alaska

DAY ONE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

- 8:00 am Meeting Overview
- Introductions
 - Purpose of Collaborative
 - Review of Previous Meetings and Timeline
 - Meeting Purpose, Agenda and Groundrule Review
 - Review formal participants/caucus structure
 - Meeting Notebook and Supplemental Materials Review
 - Conceptual Model Orientation

Meeting Purpose:

Continue to work together on one of the agreed primary issues, Northern Fur Seals (NFS). Do this by creating a common base of understanding on both NFS and fisheries in the Bering Sea area, experiment with a conceptual model as a tool to help reflect the stakeholders' common understanding, and to focus on building agreement on specific research needs and possible conservation actions for the NFS.

I. NORTHERN FUR SEALS

- 9:15 am Northern Fur Seal: Status and Life History
Lead Presenter: Rolf Ream, National Marine Mammal Lab - NMML
LTKW Perspective: From Survey Findings (if applicable) Karin Holser, St. George Island and Aquilina Lestenkof, St. Paul Island
Other Resource Experts Available:
- Andrew Trites, University of British Columbia
 - Bob Delong, NMML

TOPICS

Overview: Status of northern fur seal and life history parameters (including pup mortality rates, pup weight/ condition, juvenile survival rates, pregnancy rates, etc); population trends (including history of experimental harvest); and foraging and migration patterns (including where they forage, at what depth, on which species, prey size, etc.) by age, sex and rookery. Specific information to include, presented by Rolf Ream:

- Pup production and trends in pup production from 1950 to 2004 by island and rookery (1964 to 2004).
- Pup weight and trend data from 1957 to 1971 and 1984 to 2004 by island.
- Food habits data based on scat from 1987- 2000 by island and rookery.
- Summary of foraging locations of northern fur seals during most of 1995 - 2003.
- Summary of seasonal movements and migration timing of northern fur seals 2002.
- NFS count data and trends from 1911 to 2004 by island.

Age structure summary of subsistence (1993-2003) and commercial (1956 - 1972 for St. George and 1956 - 1984 for St. Paul).

- 10:30 am BREAK

10:45 am Questions and Answers on NFS Overview

11:15 am Comparisons of Pribilof NFS population with other populations
Co-Lead Presenters: Rolf Ream, NMML and Vladimir Burkanov, private consultant providing Russian Perspective
LTKW Perspective: From Survey Findings (if applicable) Karin Holser, St. George Island and Aquilina Lestenkof, St. Paul Island
Other Resource Experts Available:
-Bob DeLong, NMML
-Doug Demaster, Alaska Fisheries Science Center- AFSC

TOPICS

Comparison of Pribilof populations and rookery characteristics to San Miguel, CA and Commander Islands, Russia.

- Position relative to shelf, forage populations, etc. with other Bering Sea populations and rookeries;
- Bogoslof Island pup production and trend data from 1980 to 1997; and
- Comparison of northern fur seal population trends with those of Steller sea lion and other marine mammals in the Bering Sea.

11:45 am Questions and Answers

12:00 am Conceptual Model Exercise

12:30 pm LUNCH

1:30 pm Northern Fur Seals: Nutritional Stress Discussion
Co-Presenters: Andrew Trites, University of British Columbia, and Bob DeLong and Lowell Fritz, NMML
LTKW Perspective: From Survey Findings (if applicable) Karin Holser, St. George Island and Aquilina Lestenkof, St. Paul Island
Other Resource Experts Available:
-Alan Springer, University of Alaska Fairbanks – UAF
-Terry Spraker, Colorado State University (CSU)
-Sara Iverson, Dalhousie University

TOPICS

- Nutrition/indices of nutritional stress (A. Trites)
- What evidence suggests that a population is exhibiting food stress (e.g. pup weight time series data, pup production numbers)? (A. Trites)
- Bottleneck Hypothesis (A. Trites)
- Discussion should include data from presumably historically food-stressed pinniped populations, e.g. San Miguel CA fur seals during El Niño years. (B. DeLong)
- Steller Sea Lion: Regime Shift and Nutritional Junk Food Hypothesis (L. Fritz/A. Trites)

2:15 Questions and Answers

II. POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTING FACTORS to FUR SEAL POPULATION CHANGES

A. Factors we have little/no control over

2:30 pm Environmental Effects, Predation and Diseases

TOPICS

2:30 North Pacific oceanography and ecosystem overview.

Presenters: Nancy Kachel, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, NOAA
Ecosystem Effects on Bering Sea Crab Populations, Gordon Kruse, UAF
Alan Springer, University of Alaska Fairbanks

3:15 Questions and Answers

3:30 BREAK

3:45 Predation: The potential role of killer whale and other predation in northern fur seal population declines.

Leads: Alan Springer, UAF and Doug Demaster, AFSC

LTKW Perspective: From Survey Findings (if applicable) Karin Holser, St. George Island and Aquilina Lestenkof, St. Paul Island

4:15 Diseases:

Lead: Terry Spraker, CSU

4:30 Questions and Answers

4:45 pm Continue Conceptual Model Exercise

REVIEW of FIRST DAY

6:00 pm SOCIAL AT THE NATURE CONSERVANCY – 715 L Street

DAY TWO: SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

8:30 am Reconvene and Review Day 2

B. Factors We Have Some/More Control Over

8:45 am Fisheries in the North Pacific: Overview

Areas of Prey Concentration, Bruce Robson, private consultant

Co-Presenters for Fisheries: Dave Ackley, NMFS Juneau, Libby Logerwell, AFSC; Gordon Kruse, UAF; Lowell Fritz, NMML and Karl Haflinger, SeaState, Inc.

LTKW Perspective: From Survey Findings (if applicable) Karin Holser, St. George Island and Aquilina Lestenkof, St. Paul Island

Other Resource Experts Available:

-Andrew Trites, University of British Columbia

TOPICS

Background/Maps: Prey species distribution maps of Bering Sea forage fish species; Non-commercially fished species (prey items like capelin, smooth tongue, smelt, etc.) (Bruce Robson)

Fisheries Overview

What fisheries exist (target species, gear and boat type, by-catch rates and biomass, and species taken), and how fisheries occur in eastern Bering Sea over space and time – a historical profile.

- Temporal trends in species diversity in the region. (Libby Logerwell)
- Status and trends of key prey species in the EBS, sub-arctic, and California Current (WA and OR Coasts/fur seal migration corridor) (L. Logerwell)
- Socio-economic considerations including value of fisheries, communities using fish resources. (L. Logerwell)
- Herring fishery (Gordon Kruse)
- Spatial and temporal trends in commercial fisheries removals including shifts in target species, area closures, and gear. (Dave Ackley: from 1991 – 2004)
- Bycatch over time of prey species important to NFS. (D. Ackley 2003-2004)
- Recent (1999 - 2004) spatial and temporal trends in the pollock fishery, (Karl Haflinger)
- Overview of current management regulations (D. Ackley)
 - Management considerations (including bycatch, sea lions and AFA-related) affecting the Pollock fishery (K. Hafinger)
- Spatial and temporal trends of Pollock catch and biomass in NFS foraging area (L. Fritz)

10:40 am BREAK

10:50 am Questions and Answers

11:15 am Continue Conceptual Model Exercise

11:30 am Subsistence Takes

Presenter: Aquilina (Debbie) Lestenkof, Co-Director, Ecosystem Office, Tribal Government of St. Paul

TOPICS

The northern fur seal subsistence harvest:

- How it is conducted
- Its importance
- Shortfalls and future outlook

Supplemental Information: Annual subsistence harvest reports/draft subsistence harvest EIS.

11:40 am Questions and Answers

11:45 pm Contaminants
Shannon Atkinson, Alaska Sea Life Center

11:55 pm Questions and Answers

NOON LUNCH

12:45 pm Development, Research and Activities on and around the Islands (other than subsistence)
On-Islands Lead Presenter: Char Kirkwood, City of St. Paul Development Director
Other Resource Experts Available
-Aquilina Lestenkof, Co-Director, Ecosystem Office, Tribal Government of St. Paul
-John R. Mercurieff, City Manager of St. Paul
-Karin Holser, Coordinator, Pribilof Islands Stewardship Program, St. George Tribal Council

Off-Islands Lead Presenter: Steve Insley, University of California-Santa Cruz

TOPICS

12:45 pm 1982 – Forward (C. Kirkwood)

1:00 pm Acoustic Tracking of NFS in the Bering Sea (S. Insley)

1:15 pm Questions and Answers

1:30 pm Entanglement and Marine Debris
Co-Presenters: Chuck Fowler, NMML and Mike Williams, LGL

TOPICS

History & current status of northern fur seal take resulting from (a) entanglement in marine debris, including debris and gear type and

Specific information to include:

- Entanglement data from 1967 to 1991 (St. Paul Island only). (C. Fowler)
- Correlation between entanglement rates and changes in pup numbers, lagged 4-6 years (C. Fowler)
- Entanglement data from 1998 forward. (M. Williams)

1:50 pm Questions and Answers

2:05 pm Incidental Take of Marine Mammals
Presenter: Doug Demaster, AFSC/NMFS

TOPICS

- History and current status of incidental take by US commercial fisheries: Groundfish, near shore and high seas.
- Summary of fisheries related bycatch mortality by year and gear type in Alaska.

2:20 pm Questions and Answers

2:30 pm BREAK

- 2:45 pm Conceptual Model Exercise: (presenters in round-table configuration)
1. With presenters and experts, review, revise and complete boxes in Conceptual Model
 2. Presenters discuss strength of data, data gaps/needs, importance of factors, potential linkages

Experts and presenters will be asked:

- to reconfirm that the major points and/or factors they presented were captured on the Conceptual Model by the lead for this exercise, and
- to add those factors that were missed

In addition, experts and presenters will then be asked to discuss various factors in the Conceptual Model, in order to assist the PIC to synthesize the information by reflecting on:

- Potential links between factors
- Potential relevance of the factors, keeping in mind the following criteria:
 - Level of influence the factor has on the health of the Northern Fur Seal population
 - Level of credibility in the data
 - To what degree there is control over the factor

Experts and presenters will only be requested to provide reflections on those areas with which they are professionally familiar. The scientists will not be expected to arrive at conclusions for which they believe there is insufficient information.

5:00 pm Dinner at the UAA Commons or on your own

6:30 pm Fur Seal Conservation Plan Overview
NMFS report on Draft Fur Seal Conservation Plan
Presenter: Kaja Brix, NMFS Protected Resources

6:45 pm Questions and Answers

7:00 pm Endangered Species Act, including Steller sea lion history (biological and political lessons learned)
Presenter: Doug Demaster, AFSC
Other Resource Experts Available: Kaja Brix, NMFS

TOPICS

- Endangered Species listing process
- How close is this population to being classified as threatened or endangered?
 - What is the process?
- Is there a PVA that estimates extinction probability?
- How would a listing effect the subsistence harvest and fishing harvests?

7:15 pm Questions and Answers

7:25 pm Stretch Break

7:30 pm Conceptual Model Discussion

Stakeholders will use the Conceptual Model to begin to identify:

1. Those areas in which stakeholders can agree there is a need for additional information. This exercise is expected to lead to eventual agreement on support for research programs.
2. Those areas in which stakeholders can agree there is potential interaction or linkage of factors.

(If stakeholders can agree on potential linkages, further discussion may take place regarding the possibility of additional action. This exercise may lead to consideration, this evening or the following day, of potential actions and analysis, experimental management or conservation programs involving all sectors.)

9:00 p.m. Close

DAY THREE: SUNDAY, JANUARY 30

III. POTENTIAL RESPONSES TO ADDRESS DECLINE

8:30 am Review agenda

8:40 am Research Needs

Co-Presenters: Tom Gelatt, NMML; Don Calkins, Alaska Sea Life Center; Andrew Trites, University of British Columbia

- NMFS - NFS Research Needs, Presenter: Tom Gelatt, NMML
- NPRB Funded Research on NFS Bogoslof/Pribilof foraging area, Presenter: Tom Gelatt, NMML
- Alaska Sea Life Center Research, Presenter: Don Calkins
- North Pacific Universities Marine Mammal Research Consortium, Andrew Trites, University of British Columbia
- St. George Research Plans/Proposals, Karin Holser, Coordinator, Pribilof Islands Stewardship Program, St. George Tribal Council
- St. Paul Research Plans/Proposals, Aquilina Lestenkof, Co-Director, Ecosystem Office, Tribal Government of St. Paul

9:45 am Questions and Answers

10:00 am BREAK

10:15 am Align research needs with Conceptual Model and agree on a list of research needs

10:30 am Resume discussion from previous evening regarding potential linkages, potential areas of agreement and potential actions

NOON LUNCH

1:00 pm Resume discussion from previous evening, and potentially agree on concluding statements

3:30 pm Next Steps for the Pribilof Islands Collaborative

-Next meeting date and agenda topic

-General feedback on Conceptual Model and if it should be used at next meeting

4:00 pm Close